Office of the Executive Council

Annual Report

2015-16

Newfoundland
Labrador

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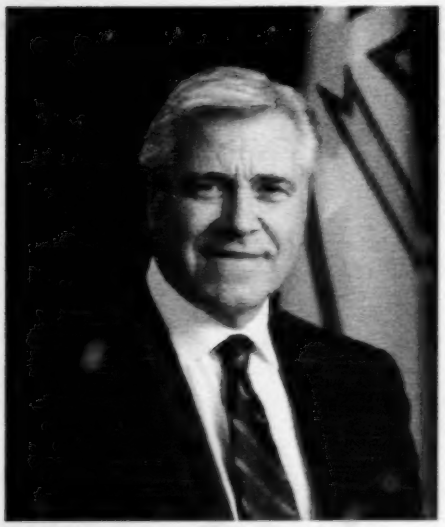
MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER



It is my pleasure to present the Annual Report for the Office of the Executive Council (OEC) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016. In keeping with the requirements of a Category 3 entity under the *Transparency and Accountability Act,* this public report highlights achievements of the Office of the Executive Council in meeting 2015-16 objectives, as outlined in the 2014-17 Activity Plan.

The Office of the Executive Council supports the work of government departments and agencies, Cabinet and its committees and provides leadership to the provincial public service.

A valued accomplishment of the Office of Executive Council in 2015-16 was the introduction of legislation supporting our government's commitment to greater openness, transparency and accountability.

The creation of the Independent Appointments Commission modernizes the appointment process and ensures fully qualified people are appointed to the many agencies, boards and commissions that deliver important services to residents. This is the strongest commitment to removing partisanship from appointments in the history of Newfoundland and Labrador, and one of the most open and impartial appointments processes in Canada.

As Premier, I am leading efforts to improve openness and accountability of government, and engage in greater collaboration with industry, labour, community groups and the general public. The creation of the new Communications and Public Engagement Branch increases our ability to have more meaningful communication with people, so that we can develop better policies and programs.

I would like to recognize the hard work of the employees of the Office of the Executive Council for their commitment to helping fulfill their mandate during the past fiscal year. This report was prepared under my direction and, as Premier, I am accountable for it.

HONOURABLE DWIGHT BALL
PREMIER

OVERVIEW

The Office of the Executive Council of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is the Premier's Department and plays a critical role in supporting the effective operation of government.

The OEC's three key roles are: leadership, coordination, and the provision of advice and support. Many of the activities focus on ensuring informed, effective decision-making and public sector management. These activities support the strategic priorities of government, and ultimately contribute to the development and delivery of public services to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

For the purpose of this 2015-16 annual report, the OEC includes:

- Office of the Clerk of the Executive Council;
- Lieutenant Governor's Establishment;
- Policy Innovation and Accountability Office;
- Communications Branch;
- Protocol Office; and,
- Financial Administration Division.

Other central agencies of the OEC, including the Human Resource Secretariat, the Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs Office, the Office of the Chief Information Officer, the Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, the Office of Public Engagement, and the Women's Policy Office prepare their own plans and reports in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.

Staff and Expenditures

The OEC has a staff complement of 74 (47 female and 27 male) and expended approximately $5.2 million for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016[1]. The details are as follows:

Central Agency	Staff Complement	2015-16 Expenditures
The Office of the Clerk of the Executive Council and Cabinet Secretariat[2]	38	$2,719,545
Lieutenant -Governor's Establishment	11	$608,443
Communications Branch	13	$1,053,669
Financial Administration	12	$827,023
TOTAL	74	$5,208,680

[1] Source for 2015-16 Expenditures: Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for Fiscal Year Ended 31 March 2016 (un-audited)

[2] Cabinet Secretariat includes the Protocol Office and the Policy Innovation and Accountability Office.

MANDATE

The mandate of the OEC is as follows:

- Support the Premier and the work of Cabinet and its Committees;
  - Facilitate, coordinate and support the Cabinet decision-making process, formulate orders, and communicate decisions of Cabinet;
  - Facilitate and coordinate advice and initiatives on matters related to economic policy, social policy, and government operations;
  - Facilitate and coordinate performance-based planning and reporting throughout government and its public bodies; and,
  - Facilitate and coordinate the Regulatory Reform Initiative and the Policy on Evaluation.
- Support the role of the Lieutenant-Governor;
- Advise on protocol matters;
- Provide strategic communications, counsel and support to the Premier and Cabinet and coordinate government-wide communication activities; and,
- Provide leadership of the provincial public service to ensure that government has the policy, human resource, and management capacity it needs to develop and deliver effective policies and programs.

LINES OF BUSINESS

In fulfilling its mandate, the OEC provides the following lines of business:

1. Support to the Premier and Cabinet:

The OEC is the lead agency of the public service that provides support to the Premier's role of setting overall government policy, coordinating initiatives brought forward by ministers, and developing responses to cross departmental issues. The office is also the primary support for Cabinet and its Committees and provides for the effective and efficient operation of the Cabinet process. This role incorporates policy analysis, the preparation of briefing materials, the coordination and facilitation of Committee and Cabinet meetings, coordination of the legislative agenda, and the maintenance of Cabinet records. General operational support is also provided to the Office of the Premier.

2. Support and Leadership to the Public Service:

On behalf of the Premier and Cabinet, the OEC also provides support and leadership to the public service through the following:

Planning and Coordination

The OEC ensures consistency in the application of government planning and coordination efforts as noted below:

Performance-based Planning and Reporting: The OEC leads and provides support and guidance to Provincial Government departments and public bodies in the development of multi-year performance-based plans and reports. The office reviews these documents to provide feedback on the degree to which they comply with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. The OEC also provides support services to ministers and deputy ministers in the development and monitoring of deputy ministers' performance contracts.

Regulatory Reform: The OEC leads and provides support and guidance to Provincial Government departments and public bodies on the Regulatory Reform Initiative. This includes tracking and maintaining the regulatory

count, providing analyses of the regulatory impact of policy proposals, and providing support and advice on the development of Regulatory Improvement Plans and Regulatory Impact Analyses.

Policy on Evaluation: The OEC leads and provides support to Provincial Government departments on the implementation of the Policy on Evaluation. This includes assisting departments and agencies in the development of evaluation plans and accountability frameworks, as well as providing evaluation advice on new and existing initiatives.

Capacity Development

The OEC ensures that the public service has the capacity and readiness to implement the directions of government. This is carried out by providing leadership in priority areas as noted below:

Policy Capacity: The OEC actively contributes to government's capacity for better informed and coordinated policy advice to Cabinet and executive decision-makers. By establishing a professional standard for policy development in government (the NL Policy Model), strengthening a community of practice for policy practitioners through PolicyNL, and by facilitating ongoing networking and learning opportunities, the OEC is helping to enhance government's policy capacity and to encourage innovation which supports modern policy development and improved service delivery.

Recognition of Excellence: The Public Service Award of Excellence is a peer-nominated award and is presented annually by the Premier and Clerk of the Executive Council to employees of any department or central agency of government. It recognizes individuals and teams who have made outstanding contributions to the public service and is the highest honour an employee can receive from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Recipients of the Public Service Award of Excellence are selected by a committee made up of persons who are familiar with, but outside of, the public service.

Executive Development: The OEC provides development opportunities for individuals in executive roles to ensure that the public service maintains and develops executive capacity. Development opportunities include, but are not limited to: Executive Onboarding for new appointees to executive positions; learning plans; speaker series; and other learning and development activities and secondment opportunities in a variety of areas such as governance, planning and reporting, evaluation, and policy analysis.

Communications and Consultations

The Communications Branch provides strategic communications counsel and support to the Premier, Cabinet and its Committees; manages corporate communications; co-ordinates communications activities across government; provides critical strategic lead on issues management; and manages government's corporate social media profile.

Roles include developing communications and consultation policies and procedures; advising on communications and consultation planning; managing news release distribution services; providing video and photography support to the Premier and Cabinet; overseeing government's web content standards; and providing multimedia communications support.

Marketing and Brand Division

The Marketing and Brand Division supports departments to market their programs and services to residents in Newfoundland and Labrador. The division also assists departments and government agencies attract foreign direct investment to the province and assist local businesses to pursue new business opportunities in national and international markets.

3. Support to Lieutenant -Governor and Other Dignitaries

The OEC provides executive, administrative, and household support to the Lieutenant -Governor, including the care and operations of Government House. It also advises government members and departments on official matters of provincial, national and international protocol and organizes state and ceremonial events. The OEC organizes itineraries for visiting diplomats, heads of state, senior government representatives and other visitors, and coordinates flag and regalia ceremonies and protocols for local and national events.

4. Financial, Operational and Administrative Services

The Financial Administration Division provides financial management and advisory services to various departments/divisions within the corporate structure (OEC, the Department of Finance, the Public Service Commission and the Consolidated Fund Services). Responsibilities include the provision of accounting, financial reporting, budgeting, and general operations services to the designated departments/divisions. The division also ensures that all employees are informed of departmental and general government guidelines and procedures relating to the above services.

VISION

A vision statement describes the ideal state an organization is striving to achieve in the long term. The vision of the OEC is based on the overarching goal of excellence in the public service, driven by accountability and innovation.

The vision of the Office of the Executive Council is of an accountable, innovative government demonstrating public service excellence.

MISSION

By March 31, 2017, the Office of the Executive Council will have improved the capacity of the public service to effectively manage the public sector in support of the implementation of government's agenda.

REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

Issue 1: Policy Capacity

The OEC supports the development of policy capacity throughout the public service, ensuring that departments and individual policy practitioners have the skills and resources necessary to facilitate effective policy development.

In 2015-16, the OEC continued to inform and engage policy professionals by providing opportunities to learn about innovative policy development practices. Through PolicyNL community of practice, the OEC accomplished its objectives, delivering a number of policy newsletters and collaborating with partners to coordinate the second annual Environmental Policy Case Competition, as well as hosting policy innovation events on subjects such as policy labs and behavioural economics/'nudging'. Also undertaken in 2015-16 was an evaluation of PolicyNL to assess its effectiveness in strengthening the Government of NL's policy development community of practice. Lessons learned from the evaluation are being used to guide the development of the 2016-18 PolicyNL Action Plan, and will include improvements to the PolicyNL Marketplace and the NL Policy Model.

Goal: By March 31, 2017, the Office of the Executive Council will have enhanced the public service's capacity for policy development.

Objective 2: By March 31, 2016, the Office of the Executive Council will have continued to implement improvements to support policy capacity.

Measure: Continued improvements to support policy capacity

Indicators	Accomplishments
Conducted an evaluation of PolicyNL	The OEC prepared a detailed evaluation report on PolicyNL. The report drew upon three primary sources of information: • Administrative Data: The evaluation included the review and analysis of administrative data collected since the 2012 launch of PolicyNL. This included past event registration information and event feedback forms. • Focus Groups: Four targeted focus groups were undertaken (e.g., executives, line directors, policy directors, and public policy professionals) to explore the effectiveness of PolicyNL in meeting their needs and needs of their staff. Specific areas explored included awareness, knowledge, practical application, engagement, and participation in PolicyNL activities. • Online Survey: A survey of all internal members of the PolicyNL community was carried out in partnership with the Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency (NLSA). The survey explored how various elements of PolicyNL meet the needs of its practitioner community. Of 664 surveys sent out, NLSA received 223 responses (33.6 per cent response rate).
Explored new directions and collaborated on best practices in policy development and continuous improvement in government	*Policy Innovation Labs* are currently being implemented in other Canadian government jurisdictions and around the world. These labs promote interactive approaches to gathering critical information about public issues from an end-user perspective and provide a framework and methodologies to test potential solutions in advance of implementation. In March 2016, the OEC, through PolicyNL and in collaboration with the Office of Public Engagement, hosted a half-day workshop, *Exploring the Potential of Innovation Labs*. This event was attended by 23 government policy practitioners, and featured a web-based presentation from the Social Innovation Lab at Employment and Social Development Canada on critical lab success factors, as well as facilitated exercises to expose participants to specific lab tools and techniques. *Behavioural Economics and Nudging* are relatively new applications to public policy design, involving the presentation of choices which are strategically designed to elicit specific behaviours and have been successfully applied across a broad spectrum of policy fields. In March 2016, the OEC, through PolicyNL collaborated with The Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development (Harris Centre) at Memorial University in a half-day event to explore potential applications of "nudges" to achieve policy and organization goals in NL. The event featured an overview by Julian House of the Behavioural Insights Unit in the Government of Ontario; and presentations by a five-person panel from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and Memorial University, each of whom delivered their unique perspectives on the uses of nudging (e.g., in healthcare, climate change, law enforcement). Policy/innovation labs and behavioural economics/nudging have not previously been

	explored within the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the above-mentioned initiatives generated considerable interest by those involved, with the consensus from participants for a desire to explore these subjects in greater depth in the coming year. *Environmental Policy Case Competition:* In March 2016, the OEC coordinated and hosted the second annual Environmental Policy Case Competition for 20 graduate students in Memorial University's Master of Arts in Environmental Policy program at Grenfell campus. The OEC (through PIAO) played the key coordination role in establishing guidelines for the competition, helping to finalize the four environmental policy case studies, convening four high-profile judges and facilitating the delivery of (mock) policy presentations on the day of the event.
Continued to promote networking and information sharing among policy professionals	Networking and Information sharing is an essential component of building PolicyNL, government's policy development community of practice. In 2015-16, in addition to the events noted above, the PIAO continued to create opportunities for networking and information sharing among policy professionals through: • The development and publication of four Policy Excellence Newsletters (The PEN) in August and October, 2015 and February and March 2016. These newsletters were sent to approximately 500 members of PolicyNL and featured articles on PolicyNL events (e.g., policy case competitions), contributions from within the policy community, as well as information pertaining to policy development and policy innovation such as Behavioural Insights and Nudging, Policy Labs, and user-based design; • The delivery of three PolicyNL Coffee Breaks on diverse topics such as Gender-based Analysis, Human Rights in the Policy Process, and a Demographic Overview and Economic Outlook for NL; and • A Policy Director's Forum which served to update this key group on matters pertaining to public engagement, the Council of the Federation meetings which occurred in St. John's in the summer of 2015, and guest presentation from the Conference Board of Canada on the use of its e-library to enhance policy research.
Identified areas for improvement of information and documentation processes	OEC took a leadership role in 2015-16 to ensure that process improvements were identified and acted upon and divisions were provided with the necessary guidance on information management initiatives. In taking this leadership role, the OEC leads improvement and consistency in information and documentation processes. In 2015-16, OEC led a number of initiatives within its divisions to improve information and documentation processes. This included the processes used by departments to provide required information to Cabinet Secretariat for decision making purposes. To help support a consistent and compliant submission process, two information sessions were held with approximately 80 executive administrative support staff from across government. These administrative staff are responsible for submitting documents and it is crucial that there is a consistent understanding of the established process around creation and submission of documents. These sessions promote awareness of the submission process and help to ensure Cabinet Secretariat's support of the decision-making process is efficient and effective.

	Also in 2015-16, the OEC worked with the Office of Public Engagement to review their records management practices. A resulting classification structure, which sets out the way that official records of the office are organized, was developed to enable efficient records retrieval and overall management.

In 2016-17, the OEC will continue to explore innovative approaches to policy development, and seek to improve its information sharing and collaboration practices among Government of NL policy professionals.

Objective 3: By March 31, 2017, the Office of the Executive Council will have reviewed the enhanced supports provided to further build policy capacity.

Measure: Reviewed the enhanced supports provided to further build policy capacity

Indicators:

- Implemented select recommendations arising from the PolicyNL Evaluation.
- Continued exploration, and review, of select innovative policy development practices.
- Further promoted networking and information sharing among policy professionals.

Issue 2: Planning and Coordination

Through the Policy Innovation and Accountability Office (PIAO) the OEC provides oversight of, and support to, departments and public entities in relation to: performance-based planning and reporting requirements (accorded by the *Transparency and Accountability Act*); government's Policy on Evaluation; and Regulatory Reform. These processes help to ensure that government operates in a transparent and accountable manner; that programs and policies are evaluated for their efficacy and efficiency; and that regulations do not impose undue burden on the public.

In 2015-16, the OEC finalized a review of policies and processes that support these key mechanisms of accountability with an aim to:

- streamline planning and reporting requirements;
- improve administrative efficiencies; and
- increase planning synergies.

The OEC developed recommendations to improve planning and reporting across government for future consideration. These recommendations drew heavily upon the consultation work that had been undertaken with Accountability Coordinators as part of the ongoing effort to improve the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's strategic planning and reporting activities.

Goal: By March 31, 2017, the Office of the Executive Council will have improved planning and coordination requirements across government.

Objective 2: By March 31, 2016, the Office of the Executive Council will have developed new policies, processes and practices which streamline and refine required planning and coordination processes.

Measure: Developed new policies, processes and practices

Indicators	Accomplishments
Research and consultation findings considered	Building off the research and consultation efforts completed in 2014-15, OEC moved forward with finalizing its analysis in 2015-16 to simplify the structure of plans and reports towards improving public planning and reporting documents as required under the *Transparency and Accountability Act.*

	The OEC held additional meetings with coordinators to further discuss opportunities to streamline the planning and coordination processes.
New policies, processes and practices developed and implemented	In 2015-16, significant work was completed to identify opportunities for improving the efficiency of performance-based planning and reporting requirements going forward. Meetings were held with various Departments to discuss opportunities to incorporate continuous improvement approaches within Government. The OEC will continue its work to develop and implement new policies, processes and practices for performance-based planning and reporting into 2016-17. As part of the continuous improvement process, OEC has also been examining opportunities related to regulatory improvement in conjunction with the other Atlantic Provinces. This work has resulted in specific areas of focus in an effort to reduce red tape. This work is part of the broad perspective on a policy on continuous improvement, and will support the incorporation of a specific policy on continuous improvement. Opportunities for enhancing skills in areas such as change management, lean management, and project management to support a culture of continuous improvement were also explored in collaboration with departments. The OEC will continue to work in 2016-17 to support further development opportunities in relation to continuous improvement.
Resources developed to support new policies, processes and practices	Annual Report Guidelines were updated and posted online for Accountability Coordinators in advance of preparation of Annual Performance Reports for 2015-16 at the following url: http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/exec/cabinet/publications/pdf/Guide_Ann_Perf_Reports.pdf). An updated Transparency and Accountability Planning and Reporting Calendar was also posted online at the following url: http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/exec/cabinet/pia/pdf/tao_planning_reporting.pdf. To improve its support to government departments in advance of its review of 2015-16 Annual Reports, OEC completed a review of internal feedback processes and mechanisms with the aim of introducing efficiencies in providing support to government entities. As a result, a more streamlined review and feedback process was implemented. Previously, multiple feedback mechanisms existed and there were inefficiencies identified in the overall workflow process This effort is expected to improve both workflow during the compliance review process and further standardize the feedback received by Accountability Coordinators. In 2015-16, OEC also initiated further reviews of its own supporting resources for planning and coordination (e.g. planning guidelines, workshop resources) in advance of the 2017-20 planning cycle. These resources will support any changes to policies in advance of the next planning cycle.

The OEC will continue its work in 2016-17 to implement efficiencies for planning and coordination responsibilities across government based upon the work completed in 2015-16. The OEC will also provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of the changes to be introduced in 2016-17.

Objective 3: By March 31, 2017, the Office of the Executive Council will have evaluated the effectiveness of changes implemented to planning and coordination efforts.

Measure: Effectiveness of changes to planning and coordination efforts evaluated

Indicators:

- Reviewed effectiveness of revised planning and reporting policies.
- Provided training and support for new policies that enhance processes for continuous improvement.
- Reviewed effectiveness of adopting Lean techniques for select business processes.

Issue 3: Governance and Oversight of Agencies, Boards and Commissions

Members of agencies, boards and commissions (ABCs) are responsible for a broad range of administrative, adjudicative, regulatory, and advisory roles, many of which are linked to the provision of public programs and services. It has been estimated that the operating grants to ABCs in Newfoundland and Labrador accounts for approximately 43 per cent of total provincial program spending, and ABC staff comprise approximately 75 per cent of total provincial public sector employment. As government's central agency, the OEC has historically provided support to government departments with respect to ABC appointments and support. This role led to the identification of governance and oversight of ABCs being identified as a priority in the OEC's 2014-17 Activity Plan, with the objective to explore opportunities to provide better oversight and supports for effective governance of ABCs.

In 2015-16, the OEC reviewed policies, procedures and governance supports to identify opportunities to modernize the process for appointments. Following the November 2015 election, and through the December 2015 Mandate Letter, Government committed to establishing an Independent Appointments Commission as part of an overall commitment to openness, transparency and accountability. Based on this direction, the OEC focused its efforts, in consultation with the Public Service Commission, to support the development of a merit-based appointments process and government's introduction of legislation to establish an Independent Appointments Commission.

Goal: By March 31, 2017, the Office of the Executive Council will have supported effective governance by government's agencies, boards and commissions.

Objective 2: By March 31, 2016, the Office of the Executive Council will have developed revised policies and governance supports for agencies, boards and commissions.

Measure: Developed revised policies and governance supports

Indicators	Accomplishments
Continued to explore agency, board and commission appointment practices	As identified in the December 2015 Mandate Letter, a new commitment and resulting direction was received to take politics out of government appointments through the development of a merit based appointments process and establishment of an Independent Appointments Commission (IAC). The research that had been conducted supported government's commitment and direction and the OEC worked in early 2016 to facilitate the development of the proposal to realize this government commitment. It is noted that the legislation that was developed is the first of its kind in Canada. A framework was also developed to guide the appointments process, assigning responsibility for support from OEC to the IAC and the Public Service Commission (PSC). Moving forward, ABC vacancies will be posted through the PSC website. The PSC will support the work of the IAC in reviewing a specific schedule of appointments and the PSC will support departments in applying a merit-based process for the remainder of appointments.

	The OEC has shared its workings with the PSC and will continue to support the work of the PSC where required.
Developed resources to support agency, boards and commissions	The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has responsibility to ensure that ABCs are supported in carrying out their mandates, and for providing oversight of these ABCs through reporting relationships with ministers. The OEC identified governments with modern ABC oversight and management as typically providing some level of standardized training and resources to appointees. Through provision of supports, governments aim to ensure that all ABC appointees have a clear understanding of their general responsibilities and accountabilities, a minimum understanding of the basic concepts of board governance, and fiduciary responsibilities. This helps ensure appropriate governance of ABCs who are entrusted with substantial public funding and have important mandates in providing services to the province. In line with this concept and as observed in other jurisdictions, the OEC began to develop proposed resources and materials in 2015-16 and draft a general governance resource that covers a broad range of topics intended to support all appointees. This will provide appointees with relevant information on the ABC structure and function, remuneration, roles and responsibilities, legislative requirements and reporting relationship to government.
Facilitated more transparent operation and oversight of government's agencies, boards and commissions	Transparency is a key component of modern ABC management and oversight. Several jurisdictions provide a public database of appointees and/or provide opportunity to apply on vacant positions, resulting in more transparent operation and oversight of ABCs. In line with this, the OEC oversaw the development of a database for appointments to active ABCs. Upon implementation, government departments will update the system with current information regarding individual appointments to ABCs. The database is hosted by the PSC and can be found at [www.exec-abc.gov.nl.ca]. Plans to enable public expression of interest in service with an ABC will accompany this database in the future.

OEC's efforts in 2015-16 focused on developing a public data base of appointees to ABC's and implementing Government's commitment to establish an Independent Appointments Commission and a merit-based process for appointments. In 2016-17, OEC's efforts will refocus on developing new policies and governance supports for ABC's.

Objective 3: By March 31, 2017, the Office of the Executive Council will have implemented new policies and governance supports for agencies, boards and commissions.

Measure: New policies and governance supports implemented

Indicators:

- Supported the creation of the Independent Appointments Commission
- In consultation with HRS, provide support in the development of governance resources

Atlantic Red Tape Reduction Partnership
OEC has participated in the Atlantic Red Tape Reduction Partnership by working with colleagues in the Atlantic Provinces to identify opportunities that will reduce red tape and barriers to business in the region. Through this partnership Premiers agreed at the May 2016 Council of Atlantic Premiers meeting to work toward the use of the One Business One Number system for Workers' Compensation Boards and Commissions; mutual recognition of targeted occupational health and safety equipment and safety training standards; and assessment of options for standardizing the carrier profile system in the trucking system. Work continues to support future opportunities to reduce regulatory burden in the region under this partnership.

Transition Preparation
In advance of the November 2015 election, the OEC undertook significant work to lead and coordinate plans and materials to support the transition period following the November election.

Public Service Award of Excellence
The Public Service Award of Excellence is the highest honour an employee can receive from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Open to all employees, this award highlights excellence and outstanding job performance at both individual and team levels. It celebrates the exceptional work, commitment and creativity of employees who are making a notable contribution to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Each year, the Premier and Clerk of the Executive Council award individuals and teams with the Public Service Award of Excellence during Public Service Week. Employees of any department or central agency of government are eligible for this award via peer-nomination. Recipients of the Public Service Award of Excellence are selected by a committee made up of persons who are familiar with, but outside of, the public service. In 2015-16 three individuals and four teams were selected to receive the Public Service Award of Excellence as listed below.

Individuals:

- Jackie Compton Hobbs - Justice and Public Safety
- Judy Hodge - Advanced Education and Skills
- Katie Norman - Advanced Education and Skills

Teams:

- Accela Development Team - Fisheries and Aquaculture / Office of the Chief Information Officer - Joelle Aucoin, Eileen Bennett, Shannon Best, Ian R. Burford, Ingrid Connors, Adele Costello, Cory Howell, Claudette Laing, Derrick Lockyer, Peter McDonald, Sandra Murphy, Debbie Senior, Christopher Stamp and Andrew Williams.
- Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit - Newfoundland and Labrador Disclosure Team - Royal Newfoundland Constabulary - Jennifer Blanchard, Anne Marie Tibbo, and Kourtney Ward.
- Disability Policy Office - Seniors, Wellness and Social Development - Karen Davis, Mary Reid, Linda Roberts, Catherine Shortall, Philip Strong, and Susan Tobin
- The OCIO Green Committee - Office of the Chief Information Officer, Executive Council - Edgar Bonnell, Donna Bourdeau, Morley Cooze, Bruce Gellately, Necie Mouland, Randy Mouland, Curtis Snelgrove, Cindy Stone, Donna O'Toole

The Honourable Dwight Ball, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, and Julia Mullaley, Clerk of the Executive Council, presented the Public Service Award of Excellence to three individuals and four teams – June 15, 2016.

Front Row, L-R - Karen Davis, Mary Reid, Linda Roberts, Catherine Shortall, Susan Tobin, Premier Dwight Ball, Clerk of the Executive Council Julia Mullaley, Judy Hodge, Jackie Compton Hobbs, Ann Marie Tibbo, Kourtney Ward

Middle Row, L-R - Bruce Gellately, Randy Mouland, Cindy Stone, Donna O'Toole, Curtis Snelgrove, Donna Bourdeau, Necie Mouland, Shannon Best, Debbie Senior, Eileen Bennett

Back Row, L-R - Cory Howell, Derrick Lockyer, Christopher Stamp, Joelle Aucoin, Claudette Laing, Sandra Murphy, Ian Burford, Peter McDonald, Adele Costello, Edgar Bonnell, Morley Cooze

Missing from photo - Jennifer Blanchard, Ingrid Connors, Katie Norman, Philip Strong, Andrew Williams

Additional detail on this year's Public Service Awards of Excellence recipients can be found at: http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/excellence/2015/recipients.html.

Protocol Office

In 2015-16, the Protocol Office coordinated visits from 12 diplomatic and consular representatives (two of which conducted follow up visits), including:

(i) H.E. Fahad Kafoud, Ambassador, State of Qatar
(ii) H.E. Simon Tucker, High Commissioner, New Zealand
(iii) H.E. Rafael Barak, Ambassador, State of Israel
(iv) H.E. Petronilla P. Garcia, Ambassador, Republic of the Philippines
(v) H.E. Bruce a. Heymen, Ambassador, United States of America
(vi) H.E. Mona Brother, Ambassador & Mr. Lord Tien, Norway
(vii) Mr. Kevin McGurgan, Consul General, United Kingdom
(viii) H.E. Sturla Sigurjónsson, Ambassador, Iceland
(ix) H.E. Selçuk Ünal, Ambassador, Turkey (2 Visits)
(x) H.E. Luo Zhaohui, Ambassador, China

(xi) Mr. Steven Giegerich, Consul General, United States of America

(xii) H.E. Gian Lorenzo Cornado, Ambassador, Italy (2 visits)

Further accomplishments include the coordination of the annual call for nominations for the Order of Newfoundland and Labrador; receiving and acknowledging applications and forwarding Newfoundland Volunteer War Service Medals; receiving, acknowledging and processing nominations for the Newfoundland and Labrador Award for Bravery; and conducting 93 tours (1,127 individuals) of the House of Assembly.

The Protocol Office was instrumental in facilitating a program for The Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada and Mrs. Sharon Johnson, for the Governor General's Leadership Conference, May 20 – 22, 2015

The Lieutenant -Governor

In 2015-16, Their Honours, the Honourable Frank F. Fagan, and Mrs. Patricia Fagan, participated in, or hosted, nearly 300 ceremonies and events. These included presiding over and hosting an Order of Newfoundland and Labrador Induction Ceremony, presenting awards and service recognition certificates to members of community and public service organizations, and hosting the 2015 Honorary Graduates of Memorial University of Newfoundland. Their Honours visited several communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador including the Labrador Winter Games and a Lieutenant-Governor's Garden Party in Corner Brook. They also visited six communities on the North Coast of Labrador on the HMCS Charlottetown as part of a Vice Regal Cruise. His Honour officiated at swearing-in ceremonies for the Premier, Members of the House of Assembly and Members of Cabinet; hosted visits with Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Consul Generals; and hosted events honouring the work of young people such as Scouts, Girl Guides, cadet groups, and the Youth Parliament. Their Honours also attended or hosted events honouring the contribution of veterans, uniformed services and seniors. During the past year Their Honours hosted His Royal Highness, Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, and His Excellency, David Johnston, Governor General of Canada and Her Excellency Sharon Johnston, at Government House. Their Honours' work is supported by over 40 volunteer Aides-de-Camp and three volunteer tour guides. Further details on the activities of the Lieutenant Governor and Government House may be found online at www.govhouse.nl.ca.

Communications

The Communications Branch led and supported a number of key initiatives in 2015-16. Examples of the Branch's work include:

- Supported the Office of Public Engagement and Department of Finance launch of the Government Renewal Initiative;
- Increased the number of followers of the Provincial Government's official twitter account - @GovNL – by more than 30 per cent;
- Began live streaming select government announcements in the media centre in the Confederation Building in December 2015;
- Supported the transition of a new government;
- Supported departmental multi-media campaigns such as HealthLine and mental health and addictions;

Legacy Records Project

Through the Legacy Records Project, Cabinet Secretariat completed the conversion of approximately 33,000 electronic records to a readable electronic format. The electronic records were originally created over a decade ago by making an electronic copy (digitizing) of the paper record. Essentially the electronic version was a photograph of the original paper record. The conversion process undertaken converted the photograph to a type of file capable of recognizing words on the page. After the document is filed in the electronic content management system, it can then be located by searching

unique words that appear within the record. In the previous electronic version, the computer was not able to recognize text in the document.

Efforts to digitize paper records from Cabinet Secretariat spanning the 1949 to 1970 period have begun and is partially completed. Approximately 32 boxes of records covering the years 1954 to 1970 have been digitized, representing about 50 percent of the work involved to complete that project. Also as part of the ongoing legacy records project the reorganization of the records vault was completed.

Compilation of the first dataset of Cabinet decisions to be available to the public has started. Approximately 90 percent of the first 10 year increment, over 12,000 records, has been reviewed to ensure that appropriate protection of information is applied in accordance with the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015*.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Leadership of the Public Service
As the lead entity for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador's public service, the OEC has an integral role in ensuring that the public service has capacity to respond to citizen expectations of government. The importance of having a public service that is able to respond to these expectations is further highlighted as government works to identify opportunities for the efficient delivery of its programs and services. Through its support of planning and coordination across government, the OEC has a central role in ensuring that the public sector can embrace opportunities for efficiency and effectively adapt to change.

Continuous Improvement
To ensure the public service is operating in the most efficient manner, it is critical that governments strive to continuously improve their internal business processes. In the coming year, the OEC will aim to improve business improvement processes across government through the development of policies that further streamline and refine existing processes, including the use of Lean principles.

Regulatory Review
With a view to ensuring the regulatory burden is minimized and in keeping with innovative practices, the OEC will avail of the coming year as an opportunity to commence preparing the framework and scope related to a regulatory review. As part of this process, government will continue to work through the Atlantic Red Tape Reduction process in an effort to find regional opportunities to minimize regulatory burden.

Government Renewal Initiative
The Provincial Government launched the multi-year Governmental Renewal Initiative to identify a combination of measures to eliminate the province's deficit and move forward with a sustainable budgetary framework. This initiative is being led through the OEC and provides opportunities to deliver programs and services more effectively and efficiently.

Expenditures and revenue figures included in this document are based on public information provided in the Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidate Revenue Fund for Fiscal Year Ended 31 March 2016 (unaudited) and the Estimates 2015.

	Actual [3] $	Revised [4] $	Original [4] $
The Lieutenant Governor's Establishment			
Government House	653,098	659,800	665,500
Cabinet Secretariat			
Executive Support	3,712,928	3,695,400	1,606,200
Planning and Coordination	625,,901	627,200	905,300
Economic and Social Policy Analysis	575,095	576,000	790,700
Protocol	189,706	191,900	250,700
Public Service Development	20,885	20,900	28,800
	5,124,515	**5,111,400**	**3,581,700**
Communications Branch	1,652,120	1,693,200	2,211,900
Financial Administration	861,575	865,000	1,018,400
Total: Office of the Executive Council	**7,638,210**	**7,669,600**	**6,812,000**

[3] Provided in the Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2016 (unaudited)
[4] Provided in the 2015 Estimates